

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 20 March 2016

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You may tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings, at 08:15 Local Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Local Time in English, on HF as well as on many VHF and UHF repeaters around our country. Echolink listeners may connect to ZS0JPL for a relay.

This audio bulletin may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za where you will find this as well as previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you may sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

IN THE NEWS TODAY

ARISS CELEBRATES 1000 CONTACTS

SARL HALL OF FAME VOTING OPEN

AND

INTRUDERS ON THE HF BANDS

Stay tuned for more on these and other important and interesting news items.

** The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) programme has celebrated a milestone by making its 1000th school radio contact. The first ARISS contact with students on Earth took place a little more than 15 years ago. On 10 March, ISS crew member Tim Kopra, KE5UDN, did the honours for number 1 000 - a contact with students from schools in North Dakota and Minnesota gathered at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. The ARISS contact was the first to be hosted in North Dakota, and some 500 students and visitors were on hand for the big event.

ARISS International Chair Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, congratulated the ARISS team on what he called “this phenomenal accomplishment”. “With the outstanding support of NASA and the international space agencies participating in ISS, the ISS on-orbit crew members encompassing all 48 expeditions and the hundreds of ARISS volunteers worldwide, the ARISS team has reached a tremendous milestone: 1 000 ARISS contacts between schools on the ground and the ISS crews on orbit,” he said. “Since our first contact in December 2000 to today’s contact in North Dakota, hundreds of thousands of students have participated in the hands-on STEM learning that ARISS affords, and many millions from the general public have witnessed human spaceflight in action through an ARISS contact”.

** Please note that there is an error in the dates for the SARL National Convention as shown in the latest Newsletter. The dates as shown on the website landing page are the correct dates. We apologise for this error.

** Over the Horizon Radars Becoming Routine Visitors on Amateur HF Bands. The International Amateur Radio Union Region 1 Monitoring System (IARUMS) has reported a spate of over-the-horizon (OTH) radar signals on various Amateur Radio HF bands - exclusive and shared. Many of these signals are being heard outside of the Region 1 confines. A 50 kHz wide Russian OTH radar has been heard in the evening on 80 metres, often in the CW part of the band. An “often long-lasting” Russian OTH signal about 13 kHz wide is being heard on the 7 000 - 7 100 kHz segment of 40 metres, while some digital traffic (FSK or PSK) and a “Codar-like radar from the Far East” are being heard in the 7 000 - 7 200 kHz segment as well as non-amateur CW transmissions. The same OTH radar being heard on 40 meters also is appearing on 20 meters, along with digital traffic in FSK or PSK and on CW and broadband OTH radar signals from China.

Broadband OTH radars from China, Australia, Cyprus and Turkey have been monitored in 15 meters. On 10 meters, radars from Iran with FM CW and different sweep rates have been monitored, as well as fishery buoys on CW, and taxi operations on voice from Russia.

** Voting for the SARL Amateur Radio Hall of Fame is progressing smoothly. The Hall of Fame honours individuals who have made significant contributions to amateur radio in South Africa. Their memory will be preserved on a page on the SARL Web site. The first group of members will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at the SARL AGM in May.

Essays outlining the contributions of the 18 nominees can be found on the Hall of Fame page, accessible through a link on the Web site front page.

Voting is open until the end of this month. Reading the nominations is well worth your while, as the nominees have shaped our hobby. They include historical stalwarts like John Streeter, Dixon Bennett and Dave Larsen, as well as modern-day contributors to our hobby.

Vote today!

** The theme for the April 2016 issue of Radio ZS is home construction. The Editor wishes to thank Cor, ZS6CR, Hannes, ZS6BZP, Hendrik, ZS2HC, Daan, ZS6CD, Tim, ZS6IM, Brian, ZS6AE, and Eddie, ZS6BNE, for their articles. Thanks to Mike, ZS2FM, Heather, ZS6YE/5, and Dave, ZS6AAW, for their regular articles.

There is still time to get your article, in English or Afrikaans, to the Editor. The closing date is Tuesday 22 March and you can send it to radiozs@sarl.org.za. It can be one page in length or even eight pages in length - there is enough space in Radio ZS.

** It is known that vertical polarization is more sensitive to noise on SSB and CW than horizontal polarization, but this does not apply to FM with its amplitude limiting feature. The main difference between the two polarizations are observed over longer distances on VHF or higher. There is no difference between

horizontal and vertical line-of-sight (LOS) distances, but as soon as the vertical radio waves crossover the horizon and start following the curvature of the Earth they experience greater attenuation than the horizontal waves.

The record breaking VHF contacts between California and Hawaii, or South Africa and Reunion Island, could only be accomplished with horizontal polarization during Tropo Ducting. Vertical antennas are ideal for repeater operation or mobile work, but if you are interested in making very long distance contacts on VHF then start thinking about a horizontal high gain Yagi.

** Gerard Roux, ZSAYU sent us an email confirming that he will be active from Botswana at Zwaneng gridlocator KG25ij until 21 March. He will be active on VHF and will try to compete in the VHF contest this weekend. He will also be active on 6 meters. Look out for Gerard on his call A25GF

** ZS3JPY, Kobus v.d. Merwe at Kleinsee will be active during the SARL VHF/UHF contest. He will be monitoring 7,105 MHz LSB to arrange any VHF skeds, or via the VHF group on WhatsApp. His locator is JG80mh.

** The Kempton Park Amateur Radio Technical Society held its Annual General Meeting last week Saturday the 12th March 2016 at the clubhouse and the following members were elected to the committee: Hannes Scheepers ZS6EMS - Chairman JJ Siebert ZR6JS - Vice chairman Lucia Olivier ZS6LO - Secretary Trevor Reynolds ZR6TW - Treasurer Des Bryington ZS6DEZ - Technical Advisor Congratulations to the new team. We wish the new committee all the best with the task at hand and for the year ahead. A big thank you to the outgoing committee for their time, effort and leadership of more than two years. Thanks to all our members that supported and participated in the meeting on Saturday.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to remain at low levels. Currently only a few small sunspots are visible and none of them poses a threat for serious solar flares.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 40.

The 20 to 10 m bands will provide lots of DX fun.

Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Today 20 March - the SARL VHF/UHF analogue and digital contest 22 March - closing date for articles for the April Radio ZS 31 March - closing date for proposed papers for the SA AMSAT Conference, send them to saamsat@intekom.co.za 2 April - the RaDAR Challenge 3 April - closing date for SARL VHF contest logs 7 April - SARL 80 m QSO Party

And to end this bulletin a quick recap of our main news item this morning. The Amateur radio on board the International Space Station, ARISS, reached

a thousand contacts recently. This marks a milestone for this station after 15 years of talking to schools and individuals.

And that brings us to the end of this bulletin

** Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3 230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentechn sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dawie Conradie, ZR6DHC, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.